

- **Labour income in BC rises 1.4% in the fourth quarter**
- **Investment in residential construction drops 3.0% in fourth quarter**
- **Food services and drinking places industry sales rise 1.9% in December**

The Economy

- **Workers in British Columbia saw labour income, including wages, salaries and benefits, increase 1.4% (seasonally adjusted) in the fourth quarter of 2010.** This marks the sixth consecutive quarterly increase in BC labour income. Nationally, labour income was up 1.4% with significant gains registered in every province. Saskatchewan (+3.2%), Newfoundland & Labrador (+2.5%) and Prince Edward Island (+2.5%) posted the largest increases compared to the previous quarter.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Residential investment in British Columbia sank 3.0% (seasonally adjusted) in the fourth quarter of 2010.** This decline comes on the heels of four consecutive quarterly increases since late 2009. A sharp drop (-4.8%) in investment in single-family detached homes was the primary reason for the decline. Meanwhile, investment in multiple unit projects such as apartment (+13.4%) and row-housing (+9.6%) complexes increased significantly.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **Investment in non-residential building construction in British Columbia increased 2.8% during the fourth quarter of 2010.** Spending on commercial building projects advanced 5.1% after back-to-back quarterly declines. Expenditures in the industrial sector were up 1.7%, while investment in government & institutional buildings eased slightly (-0.9%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Receipts at British Columbia's food services and drinking places industry rose 1.9% (seasonally adjusted) in December.** Nationally,

industry revenues increased 1.0% with seven provinces posting higher sales. BC (+1.9%) led the way followed by Manitoba (+1.5%) and Ontario (+1.3%). Only Newfoundland and Labrador (-1.8%) suffered a notable decline.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Lumber production at British Columbia's sawmills rose 11.8% between December 2010 and the same month in the previous year.** Coastal mills pushed production ahead by nearly one-fifth (+19.8%), while Interior mill production increased by roughly one-tenth (+11.0%). Nationally, lumber output was up 14.0%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

2010 in Review

- **Wages, salaries and benefits earned in British Columbia increased 2.9% in 2010, a rebound from the sharp decline registered in the previous year.** Nationally, labour income jumped 4.0% as every province posted higher earnings. Saskatchewan (+5.9%) and Newfoundland & Labrador (+5.2%) registered the largest increases, while Alberta (+4.7%), Ontario (+4.2%) and British Columbia (+2.9%) all made significant gains in labour income after each suffered a drop in earnings in 2009.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Despite the slowdown registered during the fourth quarter, overall residential investment in British Columbia rose 10.4% in 2010.** While investment in apartment complexes continued to tumble (-34.7%), investment in single-family detached homes (+51.9%) and row housing (+18.8%) was notably stronger from last year.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

Did you know...

More than half (52%) of Facebook users feel inspired to book a holiday based on photos posted by their Facebook friends.

Data Source: Travel Industry Wire

- **Non-residential building investment continued to drop (-7.1%) in 2010, mainly due to a sharp decline in commercial projects (-15.3%).** Government & institutional building investment soared 14.1%, however, spending on industrial building slumped 16.7%. The decline in 2010 marks a third straight annual slide in building investment for the non-residential sector.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Sales at food services and drinking places climbed 1.4% higher in 2010 after making a gain of 1.1% during the previous year.** While sales at full-service restaurants remained largely unchanged, receipts at limited-service (+4.3%) and special food service (+7.5%) establishments made significant gains. Revenues generated in the province's drinking places, however, dropped sharply (-7.4%). Nationally, sales for the food services and drinking places industry were up 3.8%, largely due to significant gains in Ontario (+4.2%) and Quebec (+5.1%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Sawmills in British Columbia boosted lumber output by 17.9% between 2009 and 2010.** Both Coastal (+18.4%) and Interior (+17.9%) mills ramped up production compared to the previous year. Nationally, lumber output jumped 17.8%, led by increases in Quebec (+23.2%), BC (+17.9%) and Alberta (+13.6%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Crime

- **In British Columbia, the rate of police-reported criminal harassment, more commonly referred to as "stalking", was up 27% between 2008 and 2009.** The rate of criminal harassment is currently estimated at 48¹. Among the province's four major metropolitan areas, the criminal harassment rate was highest in Abbotsford-Mission at 53, followed by Victoria (49) and Vancouver (41). Kelowna had the lowest rate at 29. Nation-

ally, the rate of criminal harassment was up 7% to 59 in 2009. Provincial rates ranged from a low of 22 in Manitoba to a high of 82 in Prince Edward Island.

Data Source: SC Cat. no 85-005-X

The Nation

- **Economic activity in Canada expanded 3.1% in 2010, the strongest annual increase in real gross domestic product (GDP) since 2005.** Compared to the two previous economic downturns (in 1982 and 1991), the rebound in GDP posted in 2010 was stronger than the increases posted in either 1983 (+2.7%) or 1992 (+0.9%).

While growth in government expenditures remained high (+3.4%), this was paired with strong increases in consumer spending (+3.4%) and capital investment by the business sector (+7.1%). These factors helped drive final domestic demand 4.4% higher in 2010.

While exports rose 6.4% in 2010, the value of imports expanded at more than twice that rate (+13.4%), widening Canada's trade deficit with the rest of the world by roughly half (+49.0%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Canada's real gross domestic product (GDP) advanced 0.8% (seasonally adjusted at annual rates) during the fourth quarter of 2010.** A rebound in the demand for exports (+4.0%) was the catalyst for much of the increase realized during the quarter with higher shipments of energy products leading the way. Consumer spending rose 1.2%, particularly on durable goods (+2.9%), bumping final domestic demand higher (+1.2%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

*Infoline Issue: 11-09
March 4, 2011*

¹ Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population

Without a Trace – An Examination of Former Post-Secondary Students Who Left the System Without a Credential and Did Not Return

This article is excerpted from the executive summary of the recently released report *Without a Trace – An Examination of Former Post-Secondary Students Who Left the System Without a Credential and Did Not Return*. It is a general overview with specific attention paid to labour force outcomes. The full article is available online at:

<http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/OtherSurveys/AboutOtherSurveys/SSELSO.aspxf>

Introduction

The 2009 B.C. Short Stay/Early Leaver Student Outcomes Survey targeted students who left the B.C. public post-secondary system "without a trace." The eligible cohort included students from 24 public post-secondary institutions who had been registered at a B.C. public college, university college, institute, or university during the 2006/2007 academic year, had not received a credential and had not been enrolled at any B.C. public post-secondary institution at any point from September 1, 2007 until survey implementation in the summer of 2009. Overall 5,036 leavers completed the survey for a response rate of 34 percent.

Every year, thousands of students in British Columbia's post-secondary system leave their institutions without receiving a credential. Many of these are short-term stop outs, and many have merely transferred to another public post-secondary school in the province, but some "true leavers" are students who, for various reasons, have left their programs. To supplement our knowledge of student outcomes from surveys of graduates and near-graduates in B.C.'s colleges, institutes, and universities, the public post-secondary institutions, together with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development and BC Stats, surveyed

5,036 of these leavers (of a potential cohort of 15,008—a 34 percent response rate) in the summer of 2009.

The purpose of the 2009 Short Stay/Early Leaver Student Outcomes Survey was to gather data on the educational experiences and outcomes of those who disappeared from B.C.'s postsecondary system "without a trace." These data could provide invaluable information on why students leave without earning a credential, and what actions, if any, might have been taken to help them complete a credential. The key finding of this survey is that the 15,000 students who annually leave the B.C. public post-secondary system without a credential have diverse goals and experiences that are primarily positive.

A "short stay" student is one who left after taking only a few courses. An "early leaver" is one who took quite a few courses, but left before completing all program requirements.

Previous research has shown that most leavers report being satisfied with the education they received, and that achieving a credential was not always a primary goal for enrolling. Results from this study confirm this: 84 percent of respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their studies. In order to identify leavers for whom actions on the part of the institution may have led them to stay longer, respondents were divided into two groups:

- "Happy Leavers" either stayed as long as they had originally planned, or reported that they had completely or mostly met their goals (59 percent of respondents)
- "Unhappy Leavers" left earlier than they had originally planned without meeting their goals (41 percent of respondents)

Unhappy leavers were asked supplementary questions about their departure from studies, and their responses provide insight into what measures might be taken to increase retention.

Characteristics of Leavers

Forty-four percent of leavers were from colleges and institutes, 30 percent were from teaching-intensive universities, and 26 percent were from research universities¹. Women made up 57 percent of the cohort; men, 43 percent. The median age was 26 years. Ten percent had not earned any credits at their time of departure, 41 percent had between 1 and 15 credits, 19 percent had between 16 and 30 credits, and 30 percent had more than 30 earned credits.

Goals When First Enrolled

Just over half of respondents identified "complete a credential at this institution" as a main goal for enrolling. Other common goals were "decide on a career/change careers" (22 percent), "learn new job skills" (19 percent), and "improve existing job skills" (14 percent).

Happy leavers were more likely to have chosen job-related goals than were unhappy leavers.

Extent to Which Original Goals Were Met

More than half of all respondents completely or mostly met their goals for enrolling, despite leaving without a credential. Leavers from colleges and institutes were more likely to have met their goals than were leavers from universities.

Enrolment

Almost three-quarters of leavers reported having been enthusiastic about high school studies; this was true for both happy and unhappy leavers.

Ninety-four percent of leavers were enthusiastic when beginning their post-secondary studies and happy leavers had higher initial levels of enthusiasm than unhappy leavers.

Nine out of ten respondents had been very or somewhat clear on their reasons for enrolling, and 83 percent were clear on which courses to take. Less clarity when starting increased the chances of leaving unhappy.

Four out of five respondents indicated that the institution they attended had been their first choice. Reasons for choosing the institution varied slightly by leaver type: happy leavers were more likely than unhappy leavers to have made their choice based on reputation of program or institution. Unhappy leavers were more likely than happy leavers to have chosen based on the location of the institution, or the presence of friends there.

Quality

Both happy and unhappy leavers gave high ratings to the quality of services and student life, though unhappy leavers were more likely to rate counselling and advising services as poor or very poor (19 percent, compared with 10 percent of happy leavers).

Quality of courses was also highly rated: 77 percent of respondents rated quality of instruction as good or very good. Again, there were variations by leaver type. Unhappy leavers were more likely than happy leavers to rate different aspects of their courses as poor or very poor. More than half of the respondents (59 percent) felt a sense of belonging while attending at least to some extent, with happy leavers more likely to have felt a sense of belonging compared with unhappy leavers.

Although about half of leavers said that their courses were neither difficult nor easy, courses were about twice as likely to be rated as difficult

¹ Four B.C. universities focus primarily on research: The University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, and University of Northern British Columbia

or very difficult than easy or very easy. This varied little by leaver type.

Both happy (94 percent) and unhappy (69 percent) leavers reported high levels of satisfaction with the education they received. When asked what they found most valuable about being a student, both groups were most likely to cite quality of instruction.

Although a third of the respondents left earlier than they had originally planned, these leavers were likely to say they were satisfied with the education they received.

Departure

Questions around departure were asked only of unhappy leavers, to help institutions identify potential improvements.

Over one-third of unhappy leavers (38 percent) reported that their grades were lower than they expected. Fifty-seven percent stopped attending classes during the last term they were enrolled, and the majority of these did so without informing anyone at the institution.

The most common main reason for leaving, cited by nearly a third of unhappy leavers, was personal circumstances (e.g., health, family). Other reasons cited included a change in plans about the program or a job (22 percent), disappointment with the institution (22 percent), and financial issues (18 percent). Leavers from research universities were more likely to specify finances or debt load compared with leavers from other types of institutions.

Sixty-four percent of unhappy leavers reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their decision to leave when they did.

The two factors most likely to have influenced unhappy leavers to stay longer were both finance-related: 48 percent said that "not having to work at a job while studying" would have in-

fluenced them to stay, and 45 percent said that "better financial support" would have.

"Better quality of instruction" (41 percent) and "more support from faculty and staff" (39 percent) were also commonly reported as factors that may have influenced leavers to stay.

Financial Assistance and Support

About one-third of leavers overall (32 percent) said that financial problems influenced their decision to leave "to a great extent" (16 percent) or "to some extent" (16 percent), though those who left unhappy were more likely to have been influenced to leave by financial factors.

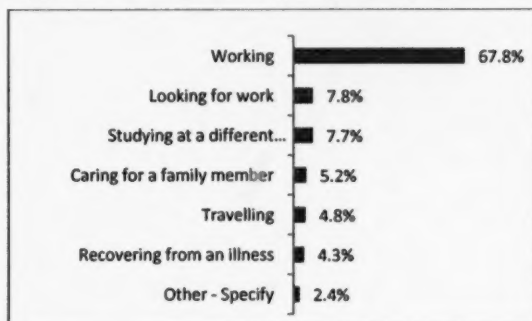
The rate of incurring government-sponsored student loans did not vary by leaver type; only 23 percent of all leavers received loans and the median amount borrowed was \$13,900.

By far the most common source of financial support reported was employment (63 percent), followed by support of family or friends (33 percent).

Subsequent Employment

At the time of the survey, 89 percent of respondents were in the labour force. The most common main activity in the four months immediately following departure was working (68 percent), and most of these leavers had had the job while enrolled. Eight percent were unemployed, the most common reason being "can't find a job/no jobs available".

Figure 1: Main Activity after Departure



Results varied little by institution type, leaver type, or credits earned.

The majority (59 percent) of those whose main activity was "working" stated that they had had this employment while enrolled. Over half (54 percent) said this employment was somewhat or very related to their career path (see *Figure 1*). It would appear that juggling work and studies had contributed to the decision to leave their studies.

Those who left happy were twice as likely to say their job was "very related" to their career path (49 percent) than were unhappy leavers (24 percent). Conversely, 51 percent of unhappy leavers said their job was "not at all related" to their career path, compared with 25 percent of happy leavers.

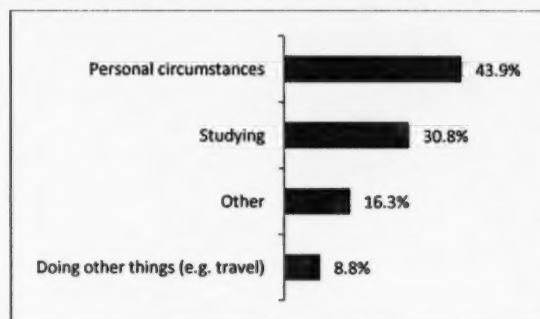
Overall, 89 percent of respondents were in the labour force at the time of the survey.

Most leavers (82 percent) were working at a paid job or business. The overall unemployment rate was 8 percent, but those who left their program unhappy were more likely to be unemployed (9 percent) than those who left happy (7 percent).

Those unemployed at the time of the survey (n=312) gave various reasons, the most common being "can't find a job/no jobs available" (44 percent).

Those 534 leavers not in the labour force at the time of the survey (neither working nor seeking work) identified their main reason for not seeking work as "personal circumstances," followed by "studying" (see *Figure 2*).

Figure 2: Reason for not Seeking Work



Further Education since Departure

Forty-two percent of leavers were either enrolled in further education at the time of the survey, or had been at some point since leaving. About two-thirds of those who had not yet enrolled said they planned to do so in the next two years.

Aboriginal Leavers

Seven percent of those surveyed self-identified as being Aboriginal. Results for Aboriginal leavers were similar to the overall results in most respects; however, there were some notable differences.

Aboriginal leavers were more likely to be older (median age 31) and they were spread more evenly across the province compared with non-Aboriginal leavers, over half of whom were in the lower mainland. Half of Aboriginal leavers were from colleges or institutes, compared with 44 percent of non-Aboriginal leavers.

Aboriginal leavers were more likely to have left happy compared with non-Aboriginal leavers, and slightly more likely to have been satisfied with the education received (86 percent compared with 84 percent). They also rated aspects of

student life and courses higher than non-Aboriginal respondents, and they were more likely than non-Aboriginal leavers to have felt a sense of belonging while enrolled.

Main sources of funding varied as well, with Aboriginal leavers citing employment much less often (45 percent) than non-Aboriginal leavers (65 percent). Thirty-seven percent of Aboriginal leavers relied at least partially on First Nations or Band funding.

Like non-Aboriginal leavers, Aboriginal leavers were apt to identify financial pressures as a reason for departure, and 48 percent said that better financial support would have influenced them to stay longer, compared with 45 percent for non-Aboriginal leavers.

Conclusion

The key finding of this survey is that the 15,000 students who annually leave the B.C. public post-secondary system without a credential represent a diverse group with differing goals and perspectives on their post-secondary experience. Only around half of respondents stated that "complete a credential" was one of their main goals when starting their studies.

Results from this survey indicate that efforts to make students feel more engaged and supported, both academically and financially, may increase retention rates. However, most students who leave do so for reasons outside of the institutions' direct control, and the majority are satisfied with the education they received.

For more information on this and other B.C. Student Outcomes surveys, please visit:

<http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Default/Home.aspx>



Email transmission information service from BC Stats



also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca or choose **RSS**

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)			% change on one year ago
		Oct 1/2010	
BC		4,551.9	1.5
Canada		34,238.0	1.2
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 4)			% change on one year ago
(BC - at market prices)		2009	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)		191,006	-3.4
GDP (\$ 2002 millions)		161,851	-1.8
GDP (\$ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)		36,287	-3.5
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 2002 per Capita)		25,374	-1.9
TRADE (\$ millions, seasonally adjusted)			% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Dec 2010		3,068	0.3
Merchandise Exports - Dec 2010		2,611	7.3
Retail Sales - Dec 2010		4,808	-2.2
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - Jan 2011)			
BC		2.3	1.5
Vancouver		2.4	1.9
Victoria		2.2	1.2
Canada		2.3	1.8
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)			% change on prev. month
(seasonally adjusted)		Jan 2011	
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC		-9.1	
Labour Force - BC		2,452.0	0.3
Employed - BC		2,251.6	-0.4
Unemployed - BC		200.4	8.4
			Dec 2010
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)		8.2	7.6
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)		7.8	7.6
INTEREST RATES (percent)		Mar 2/2011	Mar 3/2010
Prime Business Rate		3.00	2.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year		3.50	3.60
- 5 year		5.44	5.39
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE		Mar 2/2011	Mar 3/2010
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn \$ per US \$		0.9734	1.0287
(closing rate) US \$ per Cdn \$		1.0284	0.9690
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE			% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)		Jan 2011	
BC		828.54	2.2
Canada		835.31	2.6
SOURCES:			
Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate		} Statistics Canada	
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics			
For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca			

BC Post-Secondary Student Outcomes - Trends in Employment

Every year, respondents to the Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Student Outcomes (DACSO) Survey are asked a series of questions about their current employment. This paper looks at trends in employment characteristics between 1999 and 2009. The analysis uses data from approximately 6,100 to 8,200 employed former students from Applied programs per year and 750 to 1,600 employed former Arts and Sciences students per year. For more information on BC Student Outcomes, visit [BC Student Outcomes](http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Libraries/DACSO_Papers/Trends_in_Employment_pdf.pdf)

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BC Post-Secondary Student Outcomes - Without a Trace

The report, Without a Trace - An Examination of Former Post-Secondary Students Who Left the System Without a Credential and Did Not Return, is based on 5,036 completions of the Short Stay Early Leaver Student Outcomes Survey, conducted over the summer of 2009. Respondents from 24 B.C. public post-secondary institutions - research universities, teaching universities, colleges, and institutes - participated in the project. For more information on BC Student Outcomes, visit [BC Student Outcomes](http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Libraries/SSELSO/SSEL_report_Final_pdf.pdf)

http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Libraries/SSELSO/SSEL_report_Final_pdf.pdf

Sub-Provincial Population Estimates

2010 estimates of population for municipalities, regional districts and development regions are now available. Estimates for 2006 to 2009 have also been revised.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/mun/CurrentPopulationEstimates.pdf

Released this week by BC Stats

- Business Indicators, February 2011

Next week

- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 4th Quarter 2010
- Exports, January 2011
- Labour Force Statistics, February 2011
- Earnings & Employment Trends, February 2011